

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1433

AN ACT

To amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to improve morale within the Department of Homeland Security workforce by conferring new responsibilities to the Chief Human Capital Officer, establishing an employee engagement steering committee, requiring action plans, and authorizing an annual employee award program, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Department of Home-
5 land Security Morale, Recognition, Learning and Engage-
6 ment Act of 2019” or the “DHS MORALE Act”.

7 **SEC. 2. CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL OFFICER RESPONSIBIL-**
8 **ITIES.**

9 Section 704 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002
10 (6 U.S.C. 344) is amended—

11 (1) in subsection (b)—

12 (A) in paragraph (1)—

13 (i) by inserting “, including with re-
14 spect to leader development and employee
15 engagement,” after “policies”;

16 (ii) by striking “and in line” and in-
17 serting “, in line”; and

18 (iii) by inserting “and informed by
19 best practices within the Federal govern-
20 ment and the private sector,” after “prior-
21 ities,”;

22 (B) in paragraph (2), by striking “develop
23 performance measures to provide a basis for
24 monitoring and evaluating” and inserting “use

1 performance measures to evaluate, on an ongoing basis,”;

3 (C) in paragraph (3), by inserting “that, to the extent practicable, are informed by employee feedback” after “policies”;

6 (D) in paragraph (4), by inserting “including leader development and employee engagement programs,” before “in coordination”;

9 (E) in paragraph (5), by inserting before the semicolon at the end the following: “that is informed by an assessment, carried out by the Chief Human Capital Officer, of the learning and developmental needs of employees in supervisory and non-supervisory roles across the Department and appropriate workforce planning initiatives”;

17 (F) by redesignating paragraphs (9) and (10) as paragraphs (12) and (13), respectively; and

20 (G) by inserting after paragraph (8) the following new paragraphs:

22 “(9) maintain a catalogue of available employee development opportunities, including the Homeland Security Rotation Program pursuant to section 844, departmental leadership development programs,

1 interagency development programs, and other rota-
2 tional programs;

3 “(10) ensure that employee discipline and ad-
4 verse action programs comply with the requirements
5 of all pertinent laws, rules, regulations, and Federal
6 guidance, and ensure due process for employees;

7 “(11) analyze each Department or Government-
8 wide Federal workforce satisfaction or morale survey
9 not later than 90 days after the date of the publica-
10 tion of each such survey and submit to the Secretary
11 such analysis, including, as appropriate, rec-
12 ommendations to improve workforce satisfaction or
13 morale within the Department;”;

14 (2) by redesignating subsections (d) and (e) as
15 subsections (e) and (f), respectively;

16 (3) by inserting after subsection (c) the fol-
17 lowing new subsection:

18 “(d) CHIEF LEARNING AND ENGAGEMENT OFFI-
19 CER.—The Chief Human Capital Officer may designate
20 an employee of the Department to serve as a Chief Learn-
21 ing and Engagement Officer to assist the Chief Human
22 Capital Officer in carrying out this section.”; and

23 (4) in subsection (e), as so redesignated—

1 (A) by redesignating paragraphs (2), (3),
2 and (4) as paragraphs (5), (6), and (7), respec-
3 tively; and

4 (B) by inserting after paragraph (1) the
5 following new paragraphs:

6 “(2) information on employee development op-
7 portunities catalogued pursuant to paragraph (9) of
8 subsection (b) and any available data on partici-
9 tion rates, attrition rates, and impacts on retention
10 and employee satisfaction;

11 “(3) information on the progress of Depart-
12 ment-wide strategic workforce planning efforts as
13 determined under paragraph (2) of subsection (b);

14 “(4) information on the activities of the steer-
15 ing committee established pursuant to section
16 711(a), including the number of meetings, types of
17 materials developed and distributed, and rec-
18 ommendations made to the Secretary;”.

19 **SEC. 3. EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT STEERING COMMITTEE**
20 **AND ACTION PLAN.**

21 (a) IN GENERAL.—Title VII of the Homeland Secu-
22 rity Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 341 et seq.) is amended by
23 adding at the end the following new section:

1 **“SEC. 711. EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT.**

2 “(a) STEERING COMMITTEE.—Not later than 120
3 days after the date of the enactment of this section, the
4 Secretary shall establish an employee engagement steering
5 committee, including representatives from operational
6 components, headquarters, and field personnel, including
7 supervisory and non-supervisory personnel, and employee
8 labor organizations that represent Department employees,
9 and chaired by the Under Secretary for Management, to
10 carry out the following activities:

11 “(1) Identify factors that have a negative im-
12 pact on employee engagement, morale, and commu-
13 nications within the Department, such as percep-
14 tions about limitations on career progression, mobil-
15 ity, or development opportunities, collected through
16 employee feedback platforms, including through an-
17 nual employee surveys, questionnaires, and other
18 communications, as appropriate.

19 “(2) Identify, develop, and distribute initiatives
20 and best practices to improve employee engagement,
21 morale, and communications within the Department,
22 including through annual employee surveys, ques-
23 tionnaires, and other communications, as appro-
24 priate.

25 “(3) Monitor efforts of each component to ad-
26 dress employee engagement, morale, and commu-

1 nications based on employee feedback provided
2 through annual employee surveys, questionnaires,
3 and other communications, as appropriate.

4 “(4) Advise the Secretary on efforts to improve
5 employee engagement, morale, and communications
6 within specific components and across the Depart-
7 ment.

8 “(5) Conduct regular meetings and report, not
9 less than once per quarter, to the Under Secretary
10 for Management, the head of each component, and
11 the Secretary on Department-wide efforts to improve
12 employee engagement, morale, and communications.

13 “(b) ACTION PLAN; REPORTING.—The Secretary,
14 acting through the Chief Human Capital Officer, shall—

15 “(1) not later than 120 days after the date of
16 the establishment of the employee engagement steer-
17 ing committee under subsection (a), issue a Depart-
18 ment-wide employee engagement action plan, reflect-
19 ing input from the steering committee and employee
20 feedback provided through annual employee surveys,
21 questionnaires, and other communications in accord-
22 ance with paragraph (1) of such subsection, to exe-
23 cute strategies to improve employee engagement,
24 morale, and communications within the Department;
25 and

1 “(2) require the head of each component to—

2 “(A) develop and implement a component-
3 specific employee engagement plan to advance
4 the action plan required under paragraph (1)
5 that includes performance measures and objec-
6 tives, is informed by employee feedback pro-
7 vided through annual employee surveys, ques-
8 tionnaires, and other communications, as appro-
9 priate, and sets forth how employees and, where
10 applicable, their labor representatives are to be
11 integrated in developing programs and initia-
12 tives;

13 “(B) monitor progress on implementation
14 of such action plan; and

15 “(C) provide to the Chief Human Capital
16 Officer and the steering committee quarterly re-
17 ports on actions planned and progress made
18 under this paragraph.

19 “(c) TERMINATION.—This section shall terminate on
20 the date that is five years after the date of the enactment
21 of this section.”.

22 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents
23 in section 1(b) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 is
24 amended by inserting after the item relating to section
25 710 the following new item:

“Sec. 711. Employee engagement.”.

1 (c) SUBMISSIONS TO CONGRESS.—

2 (1) DEPARTMENT-WIDE EMPLOYEE ENGAGE-
3 MENT ACTION PLAN.—The Secretary of Homeland
4 Security, acting through the Chief Human Capital
5 Officer of the Department of Homeland Security,
6 shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Secu-
7 rity of the House of Representatives and the Com-
8 mittee on Homeland Security and Governmental Af-
9 fairs of the Senate the Department-wide employee
10 engagement action plan required under subsection
11 (b)(1) of section 711 of the Homeland Security Act
12 of 2002 (as added by subsection (a) of this section)
13 not later than 30 days after the issuance of such
14 plan under such subsection (b)(1).

15 (2) COMPONENT-SPECIFIC EMPLOYEE ENGAGE-
16 MENT PLANS.—Each head of a component of the
17 Department of Homeland Security shall submit to
18 the Committee on Homeland Security of the House
19 of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland
20 Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate the
21 component-specific employee engagement plan of
22 each such component required under subsection
23 (b)(2) of section 711 of the Homeland Security Act
24 of 2002 not later than 30 days after the issuance of
25 each such plan under such subsection (b)(2).

1 **SEC. 4. ANNUAL EMPLOYEE AWARD PROGRAM.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—Title VII of the Homeland Secu-
3 rity Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 341 et seq.), as amended by
4 section 3 of this Act, is further amended by adding at the
5 end the following new section:

6 **“SEC. 712. ANNUAL EMPLOYEE AWARD PROGRAM.**

7 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may establish an
8 annual employee award program to recognize Department
9 employees or groups of employees for significant contribu-
10 tions to the achievement of the Department’s goals and
11 missions. If such a program is established, the Secretary
12 shall—

13 “(1) establish within such program categories
14 of awards, each with specific criteria, that empha-
15 sizes honoring employees who are at the non-super-
16 visory level;

17 “(2) publicize within the Department how any
18 employee or group of employees may be nominated
19 for an award;

20 “(3) establish an internal review board com-
21 prised of representatives from Department compo-
22 nents, headquarters, and field personnel to submit to
23 the Secretary award recommendations regarding
24 specific employees or groups of employees;

25 “(4) select recipients from the pool of nominees
26 submitted by the internal review board under para-

1 graph (3) and convene a ceremony at which employ-
2 ees or groups of employees receive such awards from
3 the Secretary; and

4 “(5) publicize such program within the Depart-
5 ment.

6 “(b) INTERNAL REVIEW BOARD.—The internal re-
7 view board described in subsection (a)(3) shall, when car-
8 rying out its function under such subsection, consult with
9 representatives from operational components and head-
10 quarters, including supervisory and non-supervisory per-
11 sonnel, and employee labor organizations that represent
12 Department employees.

13 “(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this sec-
14 tion may be construed to authorize additional funds to
15 carry out the requirements of this section or to require
16 the Secretary to provide monetary bonuses to recipients
17 of an award under this section.”.

18 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents
19 in section 1(b) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, as
20 amended by section 3 of this Act, is further amended by
21 inserting after the item relating to section 711 the fol-
22 lowing new item:

“Sec. 712. Annual employee award program.”.

1 **SEC. 5. INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION AND IMPLEMENTA-**
2 **TION PLAN.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the
4 date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General
5 of the United States shall investigate whether the applica-
6 tion in the Department of Homeland Security of discipline
7 and adverse actions are administered in an equitable and
8 consistent manner that results in the same or substantially
9 similar disciplinary outcomes across the Department for
10 misconduct by a non-supervisory or supervisor employee
11 who engaged in the same or substantially similar mis-
12 conduct.

13 (b) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out the investiga-
14 tion described in subsection (a), the Comptroller General
15 of the United States shall consult with the Under Sec-
16 retary for Management of the Department of Homeland
17 Security and the employee engagement steering committee
18 established pursuant to subsection (b)(1) of section 711
19 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (as added by sec-
20 tion 3(a) of this Act).

21 (c) ACTION BY UNDER SECRETARY FOR MANAGE-
22 MENT.—Upon completion of the investigation described in
23 subsection (a), the Under Secretary for Management of
24 the Department of Homeland Security shall review the
25 findings and recommendations of such investigation and
26 implement a plan, in consultation with the employee en-

1 gagement steering committee established pursuant to sub-
2 section (b)(1) of section 711 of the Homeland Security
3 Act of 2002, to correct any relevant deficiencies identified
4 by the Comptroller General of the United States in such
5 investigation. The Under Secretary for Management shall
6 direct the employee engagement steering committee to re-
7 view such plan to inform committee activities and action
8 plans authorized under such section 711.

9 **SEC. 6. IMPACTS OF SHUTDOWN.**

10 Not later than 90 days after the date of the enact-
11 ment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall
12 report to the Committee on Homeland Security of the
13 House of Representatives and the Committee on Home-
14 land Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate re-
15 garding the direct and indirect impacts of the lapse in ap-
16 propriations between December 22, 2018, and January
17 25, 2019, on—

- 18 (1) Department of Homeland Security human
19 resources operations;
20 (2) the Department's ability to meet hiring
21 benchmarks; and

1 (3) retention, attrition, and morale of Depart-
 2 ment personnel.

Passed the House of Representatives April 1, 2019.

Attest:

Clerk.

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